

SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. The position of Dr. Werner Lange, head of the Zentralamt für Forschung und Technik, has been strong because of the support of Minister Leopold Rau, formerly of the State Planning Commission, and his deputy, State Secretary Paul Strassenberger. In addition to this protection afforded him by leaders of the DDR, Lange has enjoyed the confidence of the Russians. The head of ZAFT is the only member of the staff who sees Soviet members of the SED and USIG¹, Berlin-Weissensee, frequently.

2. Within ZAFT, the following staff members support Lange: Dr. Baumkohl, head of Hauptabteilung Wissenschaftlich-Technische Organisation; (fru) Lur, personnel director; (fru) Gobler,² chief of Abteilung Technischer Plan; Dr. Hans Wittbrodt, director of Hauptabteilung Forschung und Entwicklung. On a lower level, Dr. Horst Burkhardt reports to Gobler on the private affairs and political views of his colleagues; Gobler, in turn, gives the information to Lange.

50X1-HUM

3. The position, in the ZAFT hierarchy, of Dr. Günther Panning³ is not clear. Panning in the past criticized, confidentially, the DR and the Lange faction. His standing with the two groups was, therefore, not very high. In the past month, however, his position has inexplicably improved. In the past few weeks, Panning has been called to the Central Committee of the SED a considerable number of times:

Panning missed election as secretary of the SED Betriebsgruppe in ZAFT recently by only one vote. In his place, (fru) Solo⁴ of Wittbrodt's office was named.

4. In the latter part of May 1952, there were rumors of imminent personnel changes in the State Planning Commission which would have immediate effect on ZAFT. Erwin Kerber was reported to have been named to replace Strassenberger. This information was imparted at a meeting in late May of all ZAFT personnel at which news about a new type of "complex, coordinated planning" was also announced. This planning involved the mailing of four or five additional deputies to Rau. Each deputy was to supervise the work of a number of specialized ministries, in order to coordinate their work more closely.

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- 5. The Lange faction reacted against the replacement of Strassenberger by Kerber, and decided to intervene with the SED Central Committee in favor of their old chief. Lange threatened to resign and return to the Bergakademie Freiberg if the change went through. As of 21 May, no change had been made.⁴

1. [redacted] Comment: USIG = Administration of Soviet Property in Germany 50X1-HUM
2. [redacted] Comment: [redacted] name 50X1-HUM
of the chief of the Abteilung Technischer Plan as H. Gaebler.
3. [redacted] Comment: [redacted] Dr. Panning as chief of the Fachgebiet 50X1-HUM
Chemie, Steine und Erden which is responsible to the Hauptabteilung Forschung 50X1-HUM
und Entwicklung (HA FE) of ZAFT.
4. [redacted] Comment: [redacted] 50X1-HUM

Erwin Kerber has been appointed head of ZAFT. A report
confirms the information
and lists Mr. Werner Lange as deputy to Kerber.

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